

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A workflow management device comprising:
a communications interface configured to receive a user request comprising one or more user-desired product properties ~~to achieve~~associated with a user-desired product, the interface further configured to communicate with one or more workflow processing devices located external of the workflow management device;
a storage device configured to store predefined rules data for processing the user request;
and
processing circuitry configured to process the user request using the predefined rules data to produce a transformed user request without communicating with the one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed user request including information for automatically organizing workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices ~~to process in accordance with~~ the one or more user-desired product properties so as to achieve the user-desired product.

2. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the transformed user request is received by a controller external to the workflow management device, the controller configured to control the workflow in accordance with ~~to perform~~ the one or more user-desired product properties.

3. (Currently amended) The device of claim 2, wherein the transformed request comprises additional information to process the user request in accordance with specifications of the user, and the additional information comprises information to route and process the workflow in

accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties, and information to prioritize processing of the workflow in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties.

4. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein the user request is received in a job definition format (JDF).

5. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein the interface is configured to receive the user request via the Internet.

6. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the predefined rules data comprises instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

7. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the processing circuitry is an extensible stylesheet language transformation (XSLT) processor.

8. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the processing circuitry applies an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request to produce the transformed user request.

9. (Currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the predefined rules data is stored in at least one stylesheet within the storage device, and ~~the~~ each stylesheet comprises instructions written in an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) format.

10. (Currently amended) A workflow processing device comprising:
a stylesheet prestored in the device, the stylesheet having predefined rules for processing a user request received from external to the workflow processing device; and

processing circuitry configured to receive the user request, load the predefined rules, and execute the predefined rules to create a transformed request, and
wherein the transformed request comprises instructions to automatically organize workflow to efficiently process the user request.

11. (Original) The device of claim 10, wherein the user request comprises one or more user-desired product properties, and wherein the transformed request comprises information to process the user request.

12. (Original) The device of claim 10, wherein the user request is received in a job definition format (JDF).

13. (Currently amended) The device of claim 10, wherein the predefined rules comprise instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

14. (Currently amended) The device of claim 10, wherein the processing circuitry applies an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request to produce the transformed request.

15. (Currently amended) A workflow management system for managing workflow in a printing system, comprising:

one or more workflow processing devices configured to process a user request, the one or more workflow processing devices communicatively coupled to a communications medium; and
a workflow management device located external of the one or more workflow processing devices comprising:

a communications interface configured to receive the user request, the interface further configured to communicate with the one or more workflow processing devices ~~located external of the workflow management device~~;

a storage device configured to store predefined rules data for processing the user request, the user request comprising one or more user-desired product properties; and

processing circuitry configured to process the request using the predefined rules data and produce a transformed request without communicating with the one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed request comprising information for automatically organizing workflow through the system ~~to process in accordance with~~ the one or more user-desired product properties so as to produce a user-desired product.

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 15, further comprising:

a controller external to the workflow management device and the one or more workflow processing devices, the controller configured to receive the transformed request and route the transformed request among the one or more workflow processing devices for processing in accordance with ~~assign~~ the one or more user-desired product properties ~~to the one or more devices for processing~~ using information from the transformed request.

17. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the user request is received in a job definition format (JDF).

18. (Currently amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the predefined rules data comprise instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

19. (Currently amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the processing circuitry applies an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) transformation to the user request to produce the transformed request.

20. (Currently amended) A workflow assignment method comprising:
receiving a user request at a server, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
~~creating~~ providing in the server a prestored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
loading the predefined rules and the user request into a processing circuitry of the server, the circuitry configured to process the user request; and
without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, executing the predefined rules on the server to create a transformed user request, the transformed user request comprising additional information to automatically organize workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices ~~to process in accordance with~~ the one or more user-desired product properties so as to produce a user-desired product.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 20, further comprising:
~~receiving~~ sending the transformed user request ~~in to~~ a controller communicatively coupled to the server; and
the controller controlling the one or more workflow processing devices in accordance with ~~to process~~ the one or more user-desired product properties using information from the transformed user request.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the receiving comprises receiving the user request in a job definition format (JDF).

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the ~~creating~~ providing comprises ~~creating~~ providing the stylesheet in an extensible stylesheet language (XSL) format having instructions written in Extensible Stylesheet Language.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the receiving further comprises receiving the user request via the Internet.

25. (Currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the ~~loading and the~~ executing ~~are is~~ performed by an extensible stylesheet language transformation (XSLT) processor.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the creating the transformed user request comprises applying the predefined rules ~~and using an extensible stylesheet language (XSL)~~ transformation to the user request, and the transformed user request comprises a definition of workflow tasks to be performed, and settings and properties for the workflow tasks, and one or more user-desired product properties configured to produce a user-desired product in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties.

27-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) A workflow assignment system comprising:
means for receiving a user request, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
means for ~~creating~~ providing a prestored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
means for loading the predefined rules and the user request into a processing means configured to process the user request; and
means for executing the defined rules to create a transformed user request without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, the transformed user request comprising additional information to organize workflow among the one or more workflow

processing devices to perform in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties so as to produce a user-desired product.

31. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture comprising:
processor-usable media embodying programming configured to cause a processing circuitry of a workflow management device to:
receive a user request, the request having one or more user-desired product properties;
~~create~~provide a prestored stylesheet having predefined rules for processing the user request;
load the predefined rules and the user request into ~~a~~the processing circuitry, the circuitry configured to process the user request; and
without communicating with one or more workflow processing devices, execute the predefined rules to create a transformed user request, the transformed user request comprising additional information to organize workflow among the one or more workflow processing devices to perform in accordance with the one or more user-desired product properties so as to produce a user-desired product.

32. (New) The device of claim 9, wherein each stylesheet corresponds to a different subset of the product properties.

33. (New) The device of claim 32, wherein the transformed user request generated by a first one of the stylesheets has a different workflow than the transformed user request generated by a second one of the stylesheets.